

## *To the Chairman and Members of the Salcombe Urban District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,—

In presenting this my first annual report I have to remind you that my duties only commenced on April 14th, and that in consequence the first three months of the year do not properly belong to my term of office, but for the sake of completeness I have dealt with the whole year.

### DESCRIPTION OF DISTRICT.

Salcombe is a small seaport town and growing residential neighbourhood, embracing an area in acres of 1,184·020, exclusive of that covered by water. The bulk of the town faces east and south-east, being built on the margin of and facing the harbour, the entrance to which lies between Bolt Head and Prawle Point. The hamlets of Higher Batson and Lower Batson are at the head of a creek and about a mile north of the town. The district is hilly, with a substratum of drab (Devonshire) stone and covered by loamy soil.

The population is an increasing and varying one, the district being a popular holiday resort for summer visitors. At the local census taken by you on August 21st, 1907, the inhabitants numbered 1,821, exclusive of 633 visitors recorded at the same time.

There is no special industry in the place, the remains of a once prosperous shipbuilding trade being now represented by two boatbuilding yards.

The chief occupations of the inhabitants are healthy and out of door, embracing those of the seafaring, agricultural and labouring classes.

The house accommodation for the working classes is sufficient, and improvements are being carried out under the supervision of your Surveyor and in accordance with model bye-laws approved by the Local Government Board. During the year plans have been passed for the erection of 14 new houses, 9 of which have been completed, including a number of cottages.

The inhabited houses in the district number 540, giving 3·37 as the average number of persons per house.

The bulk of the sewage discharges into the estuary, but the sewage from most of the houses in North Sands Valley is treated biologically by means of septic tanks.

The Council's water supply has been constant and sufficient, and a new main has now been carried to Higher Batson for the supply of that hamlet.

The house refuse is removed by your own scavenger three times weekly and once weekly in the outlying district.

### VITAL STATISTICS.

#### BIRTHS.

During the year 34 births were registered, viz., 21 males and 13 females, giving a birth rate of 18·6 per 1,000 per annum. The birth rate for 1907 was 19·2, and the average for the previous 10 years 19 per 1,000 per annum. One illegitimate birth was registered, and is included in the above total.

#### DEATHS.

During the same period 24 deaths were registered, viz., 13 males and 11 females; the death rate for the year therefore was 13·1, this being the lowest but two for the last 10 years. Of the above 2 were visitors, giving a corrected death rate of 12·0 per 1,000 per annum.

One resident died in the Union House at Kingsbridge, and is not included in the above number.

Of the total deaths 1 occurred under 1 year of age, 3 between the ages of 1 and 5, 1 between 15 and 25, 8 between 25 and 65, and 11 of 65 years and upwards; of these 7 were 70 and upwards, 3 over 80, and 1 over 90.

From Phthisis 2 deaths were registered, making a total of 21 deaths from this disease in the last 10 years, Cancer caused 2 deaths, this disease having caused 16 deaths also during the last 10 years.

Influenza, which was very prevalent in the earlier months of the year, accounted for 1 death, making 2 deaths from that disease during the same period.

Zymotic death rate, nil.

There were no deaths from accident or suicide.

#### INFANTILE MORTALITY RATE.

This is the expression used to indicate the number of deaths under 1 year of age per 1,000 births per annum, and for the past year is represented by the figures 29.4, this rate being the lowest since 1898. The Infantile Mortality rate for England and Wales for 1908 was 121.

#### INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

During the year 2 cases of infectious diseases have been notified, viz., 1 of enteric fever and one of scarlet fever. With reference to the case of enteric fever no definite local insanitary condition could be discovered to account for the illness, neither could the origin of the case of scarlet fever be traced, the district having been free from that form of illness for over two years. It is satisfactory to be able to record that you have adopted the infectious Disease (Prevention) Act of 1890.

I regret we are still without an Isolation Hospital, and I am convinced that the expense of providing such a hospital will have to be faced sooner or later, more especially now that advantage is so largely taken of the simple method of obtaining exemption certificates from vaccination, and if the present desire to avoid vaccination continues at the same rate we shall before many years have a very large percentage of unprotected children in the district. During the year 1907 31 children were vaccinated and 2 exemption certificates granted, whereas during 1908, under the new regulations, 27 children were vaccinated and 11 exemption certificates granted, giving a percentage of over 40 of unprotected children. Of course I fully realize that in such a small district as yours a difficulty may arise in procuring a suitable site.

#### SANITARY.

During the year systematic and special inspections have been made of the district from time to time by your inspector and myself, and there have been few details which I have considered necessary to specially report upon.

#### DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

I have with your Inspector personally inspected the whole of the dairies and cowsheds in your district, and have invariably found the former particularly clean and well looked after.

With regard to the cowsheds taken as a whole, they are not well constructed, and leave much to be desired. Now that it has been so conclusively proved that bovine tuberculosis can be communicated to man and animals through milk, I feel that ere long greater precaution will have to be enforced to safeguard the public health, and that over and above the regulations for the proper construction, cleansing and limewashing of the cow-houses, cleanliness of the udders of the cows before milking, and the hand of the milkers and periodic examination of the cows by a Veterinary Surgeon for the detection of tuberculosis will be made compulsory.

The two Slaughter Houses are kept in a cleanly state.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT, 1901, SECTION 132.

Under this section of the Act I have as part of my duties personally inspected from time to time with your inspector the 8 registered Bakehouses in your district, and found them clean, properly ventilated, and drained, and with a sufficiency of air space and proper sanitary conveniences, the same remarks applying to all the other Workshops and Workplaces in the district and coming within the Act.

There are no Homeworkers, Underground Bakehouses, or offensive trades in the district.

I am Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

**V. W. TWINING,**

Medical Officer of Health.

Holm Leigh, Salcombe, 9th February, 1909.



